

## **Executive Summary**

### **Expansion of the Old & Historic District**

#### **Upper King Street**

In December 2005, the Planning and Zoning staff presented to the Council an update on historic preservation issues. Included in the P&Z work plan was a review and research into expansion of the historic districts. The first phase of the expansion is an area along Upper King Street. The primary consideration for proposing an expansion of the Old and Historic District is the desire to protect and preserve historic structures. Using the focus of protecting historic structures as a basis in determining proposed areas of expansion, Staff decided at this phase not to include the remainder of the blocks along Upper King Street to the King Street Metro station which contain almost exclusively late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century commercial and retail structures.

This phase of the expansion of the Old and Historic District covers the 1500 and lower 1600 blocks of Upper King Street. Staff has researched and documented the history of those properties which contain structures that are consistent in age, architectural integrity and historic significance with properties currently located within the district. The building known as 1520, 1522, and 1524 King Street is already certified as a 100 Year Old Building and is already protected under local historic district regulations. The extension of the historic district protection to the additional structures will maintain and enhance the visual attractiveness, cohesion, and human scale of this highly visible and significant corridor.

The properties under consideration are largely commercial, retail and office uses. The proposed district expansion will not affect the use of these spaces, and will bring with it many advantages for these businesses and property owners. Property owners will be required to apply to the Old and Historic Alexandria Board of Architectural Review for any external changes to their buildings visible from a public right-of-way, including changes in signage for their retail tenants. This standard is already being met on the north side of King Street as those blocks are already included in the Historic District. Tenants have not been adversely affected by the District expansion, and the variety and quality of their storefronts are a testament to the high aesthetic standards the District seeks to encourage. High quality historic areas offer significant economic returns to property owners.

